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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - CAPTION ADDED

DEPT FOR NEA/MAG, S/CT-RHONDA SHORE, S/CT-ED SALAZAR

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SUBJECT: MOROCCO: 2005 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM

REF: A: SECSTATE 193439
B: SECSTATE 187700

1. As requested ref A, Post submits the following text for Department's use in drafting the 2005 Country Reports on Terrorism. Embassy POC for this report is Political Officer Chad Stevens (StevensCI@state.gov).

2. Begin Text:

Morocco

The Government of Morocco remains a steadfast ally of the international community in the global war on terror. Under the leadership of King Mohammed VI, the Government undertook during 2005 important internal reforms to address the root, socio-economic conditions that create opportunity for extremist recruitment. Toward this end, King Mohammed VI launched in May 2005 the National Initiative for Human Development to combat poverty, create jobs, and improve infrastructure. The USD 1.2 billion initiative targets Morocco's poorest rural areas and worst urban slums as a means to eliminate the economic conditions that foster exclusion and despair.

Morocco also continued implementation of reforms to the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs (MOIA), first announced in April 2004, to promote religious moderation and tolerance. The reforms include measures to counter extremist ideology within Koranic schools and mosques, and a 12-month training program for incoming male and female imams initiated in April 2005. Spreading a message of tolerance and openness, the MOIA also launched in 2005 a radio station whose daily broadcasts cover almost all of Morocco. The ministry also continued development of its TV station and website in 2005.

Morocco experienced terrorism when, on May 16, 2003, Moroccan suicide bombers affiliated with the Salafiya Jihadiya movement attacked several sites in Casablanca killing 45 people (including the 12 bombers) and injuring 100 others. The Government's swift and ongoing crackdown of the Salafiya Jihadiya movement has yielded the arrest of an estimated 3,000 extremists and the sentencing of at least 900 individuals for crimes under the country's new anti-terrorism law. Many of these cases are still active in the

judicial system, which, in 2005, acquitted at least nine suspects and reduced the prison sentences of at least 30 individuals.

On March 22, 2005, the Judicial Police arrested seven individuals from a Salafiya Jihadiya cell in Mohammedia on suspicions they were planning attacks against a supermarket and restaurants along the coastline near Casablanca. In July 2005, Moroccan authorities arrested seven more individuals comprising another Salafiya Jihadiya cell in Rabat's neighboring city Sale. According to press reports, the cell plotted attacks in Rabat and other cities. Moroccan police linked the Sale cell to six Moroccans whom Algerian authorities returned to Morocco after they were arrested while training with militants from the Algerian terrorist group, the Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC). In November 2005, Moroccan security forces dismantled a 17-member incipient terrorist network that had links to small terrorist groups active in Iraq. Two of the five Moroccans who were detained in Guantanamo Bay and returned to Morocco in August 2004 were among those arrested in the operation.

Moroccan-born extremists associated with the al-Qaida-affiliated Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM) were implicated in the March 11, 2004 train blasts in Madrid. Although the recent dismantlement of GICM cells in Europe has weakened the group, individual members remain at large.

End Text.

¶3. Given the Secretary of State's designation of GICM as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 11, 2005 (ref B), and per ref A instructions, Post is also including the following information on the GICM.

¶4. Begin Text:

Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM)
a.k.a. Groupe Islamique Combatant Marocain
Description

Moroccan Mujahedin in Afghanistan set up the Moroccan Islamic Combat Group (GICM) in the mid-1990s to recruit and train Moroccans to fight in Morocco. The group seeks to overthrow the Moroccan Government and monarchy, replacing them with an Islamist state ruled by sharia law. Its long-term goal is the unification of all Muslim lands into a renewed caliphate. Since 2001, the GICM has dispersed into cells in Morocco, Syria, and various European cities.

Activities

GICM cells facilitate the movement of extremists and funds in Europe and foreign fighters headed for Iraq to conduct attacks against Coalition forces. GICM members were implicated in terrorist attacks in Casablanca in May 2003 and Madrid in March 2004. Over the last year, authorities have dismantled important GICM cells in France, Belgium, and Italy. Nevertheless, individual members are still at large.

Strength

Several dozen individuals in Europe, the Middle East, and Morocco.

Location/Area of Operation

Mostly in Europe, notably in Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

External Aid

GICM receives financial support from other terrorist groups and personal contributions from members who often engage in criminal activities. GICM leader Mohamed Guerbouzi, who resides in England, was recently granted a financial settlement as a result of his libel suit against a British tabloid that connected him to the July 2005 bombings in London and claimed he was on the run.

¶5. In accordance with ref A, Post has sent the above text as a Word Document to S/CT POCs Rhonda Shore and Ed Salazar. Bush